

Original: English

**FTAA – COMMITTEE OF GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES ON THE PARTICIPATION
OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

COVER SHEET

Name (s)	The Council of the Americas (Consejo de las Américas)
Address	680 Park Avenue New York, NY 10021 Tel. 212-249-8950; 212-517-6247 Webmaster@CounciloftheAmericas.org
Organization (s) (if applicable)	Council of the Americas
Country (ies)/ Region (s)	United States

Number of Pages	2	Language	English
------------------------	---	-----------------	---------

Issues Addressed (Check all that apply)

Agriculture	X	Subsidies, Antidumping and Countervailing Duties	X
Competition Policy	X	Civil Society	
Dispute Settlement		Electronic Commerce	
Government Procurement	X	Smaller Economies	
Intellectual Property Rights	X	The FTAA Process	X
Investment	X	Other:	
Market Access	X		
Services			

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – 2 page maximum – (see Open Invitation)

Statement of the Council of the Americas
To the Committee of Government Representatives on Civil Society

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Council of the Americas strongly supports the Free Trade Area of the Americas effort, and believes that negotiations should be completed no later than December 31, 2003 to allow sufficient time for the agreement to take effect on January 1, 2005.
- Successful implementation of previously agreed upon business facilitation measures will be a critical test of the efficacy of the agreement. Meanwhile, adoption of further proposed measures, in customs and other areas, will bring increased support and momentum to the negotiating effort. A number of specific recommendations are made in the enclosed report.
- Meeting the Ministers' objective of completing bracketed texts in each of the negotiating areas for the April, 2001 Ministerial will be an important benchmark for the negotiating process. We urge that this goal be met.
- Elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, investment reform, intellectual property protection, and access to dispute settlement are all keys to spurring economic development and growth through economic integration. We have made specific recommendations in these and other negotiating areas in our statement.
- Recognizing that there is no consensus within the Hemisphere at this time on how labor and environment should be treated in the FTAA agenda, we reiterate our previously submitted suggestion that governments commit not to weaken existing environmental, health, safety or labor measures in an effort to gain competitive advantage pending the resolution of how to address labor and the environment in the FTAA.